

FOOD AND NUTRITION. By E. W. H. Cruickshank, M.D., D.Sc., Ph.D., M.R.C.P. Second edition. (Pp. xii + 443; figs. 51; tables 78, 30s.). Edinburgh : E. & S. Livingstone, 1951.

THIS is a readable, authoritative and well documented survey of the science of nutrition. After a brief, but informative introduction on food economics and the evolution of human diets the author illustrates the present inequality of food distribution in the world to-day. The precarious position of our own economy is evident, but some may think that the problems raised by over population, especially in the Far East, are not sufficiently emphasised. About one-sixth of the book presents in detail the changes in British diet before, during and after the War. The author reminds us that "no diet, which is characterised by monotony, difficult planning, uncertain shopping and is not enlivened by a freedom of choice, can be regarded as wholly adequate, no matter how perfectly it may meet the required standards for calories and nutrients." After a clear presentation of the energy requirements of the body the contributions of proteins, fats and carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins are individually reviewed in a reliable and entirely up-to-date discussion. The properties of various foodstuffs such as bread, milk, protein and fat-rich foods, vegetables, fruit and nuts are then described. Many, whose interest is not entirely scientific, will find much to interest them here and in the chapter on the dehydration and preservation of foods. These chapters and those on dietary standards and planning, diet in dental caries and on appraisal of nutritional status should be read by anyone who would presume to advise people in normal health concerning diet. The book is not concerned with diet for specific disease conditions, but all medical men who require an authoritative survey of the modern science of nutrition, and of recent contributions which have been made to it, often by non-medical workers, should read this book.

A HANDBOOK OF SURGERY. By R. C. B. Ledlie & M. Harmer. (Pp. viii + 536, figs. 56. 21s. net). London : Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1951.

MODERN surgery is such a gigantic subject that it would seem a well-nigh impossible task to write a reasonably comprehensive account in a little over 500 pages — this, however, is what Messrs. Ledlie & Harmer have achieved. All branches of surgery, with the exception of ophthalmics, are covered. The result is a little book which will be of the greatest value both to the student and to the general practitioner.

There are 56 drawings which are clear and effective. Photographs and X-ray reproductions are excluded. Inevitably in such a book discussion of alternative methods of treatment is limited, and in places this leads to dogmatism. Generally the result is orthodox, but most surgeons would quarrel with the statement, referring to carcinoma of the stomach, that "In practice, for a neoplasm not confined to the pylorus this means a *total gastrectomy* (author's italics), the spleen being also removed. . . ."

The whole work is up to date and at least touches on most recent advances. It is, however, disappointing to find no mention in the chapter on cerebral surgery of intra-cranial aneurysms which form so large and rewarding a part of modern neurosurgery. The section dealing with fractures is closely based on the well known work of Sir Reginald Watson-Jones, to whom acknowledgment is made.

There is very little to criticize and this little book can be strongly recommended to students and practitioners.

T. K.